

FABIAN RUSSELL – BIOGRAPHY

Fabian Russell was born in Sydney, Australia in 1968. In a career spanning more than three decades, he has been at the forefront of the Australian classical music industry as a multi-award winning conductor, artistic director, orchestral musician and solo performer. He is currently the Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of The Orchestra Project, the Milan Kantor Chief Conductor of Corpus Medicorum Orchestra, Principal Conductor Western Sydney Philharmonic Orchestra and in 2023, he joined the conducting department of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

He has received invitations to guest conduct orchestras including the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Victorian Opera, Canberra Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, Australian National Academy of Music Orchestra, Australian Youth Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, , Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, Niedersächsisches Jugensinfonieorchester, Sydney Youth Orchestra, Darwin Symphony Orchestra, Geelong Symphony Orchestra, University of Tasmania Conservatorium Orchestra, Queensland Youth Orchestra, Queensland Conservatorium of Music Symphony Orchestra, Monash University Academy Orchestra and the University of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated with leading soloists including legendary American pianist Gary Graffman, Brett Dean, Richard Tognetti, Leslie Howard, Daniel de Borah and Alexander Gavrylyuk.

Fabian has held numerous conducting positions including Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of The Orchestra Project since 2002, Associate Conductor/Assistant Conductor of the Australian Youth Orchestra since 2002, Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Melbourne Youth Orchestra from 2007-2012, Principal Conductor Monash University Academy Orchestra from 2011-2015, Principal Guest Conductor University of Melbourne Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra from 2011-2016.

In 2002 Fabian founded The Orchestra Project – the Melbourne based training orchestra comprised of Australia's pre-eminent emerging artists who perform alongside members of Australia's professional orchestras. Fabian serves as Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of The Orchestra Project, receiving significant support from the Australian National Academy of Music. The Project has completed 36 performance seasons since its inception.

In addition to his substantial orchestral repertoire, Fabian has a strong interest in commissioning and performing new music. He has conducted world and Australian premieres of more than thirty major works by composers including Gordon Kerry, Brett Dean, James Ledger, Mary Finsterer, Stefan Cassomenos, Harry Sdraulig, Kate Moore and Holly Harrison. He has also recorded extensively for film, television and radio, and has conducted Film and Orchestra projects for IMG Classics with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 2013, Fabian made his Victorian Opera debut in a new production of John Adams' *Nixon in China* that receiving considerable critical acclaim resulting in the 2014 Green Room Award for *Outstanding Conductor*, as well as the 2014 Helpmann Award nomination for *Best Music Director*. *The Age* described these performances as "nothing short of a triumph, Fabian Russell's superb direction of Orchestra Victoria shows up the clarity and dynamism of Adams'

extraordinary score, but also its inner beauty and moments of reflective stillness.” *The Australian* also stated “Musical polymath Fabian Russell conducted Nixon in China with energy and finesse, drawing a powerful performance from Orchestra Victoria and an excellent cast of nine principals and chorus of twenty four.” Other Victorian Opera productions include Humperdinck *Hansel and Gretel*, Ernst Toch *Die Prinzessin Auf Der Erbse*, Calvin Bowman *The Magic Pudding* and Franz Schubert *Friends of Salamanka*.

Fabian has enjoyed a long relationship with the Australian Youth Orchestra in various roles including Associate Conductor, where he has been engaged to conduct the Orchestra in the preparation of 30 project seasons since 2002, including three international tours. He has prepared the Orchestra for various Guest Conductors including Lawrence Foster, Diego Masson, Benjamin Zander, Alexander Anissimov, Rossen Milanov, Alexander Shelley, John Nelson, Thomas Dausgaard, Simone Young, Manfred Honneck, Antony Hermus, Christoph Eschenbach and violinist Joshua Bell. In 2013 and 2021 he was a Conductor in Residence at the AYO National Music Camp and in 2022 was the Music Director of AYO Young Symphonists.

In 2007 Fabian was invited to be Principal Guest Conductor of the Melbourne Youth Orchestra and was subsequently appointed Principal Conductor and Artistic Director. Under his leadership, MYO grew to become what was considered to be one of Australia’s leading pre-professional orchestral training programs, providing unique opportunities for young orchestral musicians to perform works such as John Adams *Harmonielehre*, Olivier Messiaen *Turangalila Symphonie*, Mahler *Symphony No. 5* and many of the major ballet works of Stravinsky and Ravel.

Fabian Russell holds a Masters Degree in Music (Research) from Griffith University Queensland Conservatorium of Music. He was a recipient of a Sir Winston Churchill 2012 Fellowship to research leading American orchestra training programs. He has been an international adviser to the London-based Australian Music Foundation since 2012.